

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A bearing seat of a ball joint provided in a socket with an opening, comprising a spherical sliding surface that rotatably holds an approximately globular ball portion of a ball stud arranged in this socket and has a latitudinal direction and a longitudinal direction and an opening communicated with the opening portion, comprising:

a plurality of housing concave portions that are respectively opened at alternate positions on the sliding surface in a manner opposed to an outer circumferential surface of the ball portion and house a lubricant.

Claim 2 (original): The bearing seat of a ball joint as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the housing concave portions are respectively opened on the sliding surface so that mutually adjacent ones are different in latitudinal direction position and longitudinal direction position from each other.

Claim 3 (original): The bearing seat of a ball joint as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the housing concave portions form lines along a predetermined direction, and respective opening areas of the mutually adjacent lines are different from each other.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The bearing seat of a ball joint as set forth in ~~any one of Claims~~ ~~Claim 1 to 3~~, wherein

the housing concave portions include:

a plurality of first housing portions that form at least one tier along the latitudinal direction, having opening areas almost equal to each other; and

a plurality of second housing portions that are respectively provided so as to form tiers, at one-end side and an equator side in the longitudinal direction of the at least one tier of these first

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housing portions, respectively, along the latitudinal direction by ones having opening areas equal to each other and so that opening areas sequentially increase from the tier at the one-end side to the tier at the equator side in the longitudinal direction.

Claim 5 (original): A bearing seat of a ball joint provided in a socket with an opening, comprising a spherical sliding surface that rotatably holds an approximately globular ball portion of a ball stud arranged in this socket and an opening communicated with the opening portion, comprising:

a plurality of housing concave portions that are respectively opened on the sliding surface in a manner opposed to an outer circumferential surface of the ball portion, are respectively provided so as to form lines along the longitudinal direction and form tiers along the latitudinal direction by ones having opening areas equal to each other and so that opening areas sequentially increase from the tier at one-end side to the tier at an equator side in the longitudinal direction, and house a lubricant.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The bearing seat of a ball joint as set forth in ~~any one of~~ Claims Claim 1 to 5, wherein

the housing concave portions are opened respectively in approximately circular forms.

Claim 7 (currently amended): A ball joint comprising:

a socket with an opening portion;

the bearing seat as set forth in ~~any one of~~ Claims Claim 1 to 6-provided in the socket; and

a ball stud with a ball portion rotatably held in this bearing seat and housed in the socket and a stud portion provided in a protruding condition from this ball portion and to be inserted through the opening portion.

Claim 8 (new): The bearing seat of a ball joint as set forth in Claim 5, wherein
the housing concave portions are opened respectively in approximately circular forms.

Claim 9 (new): A ball joint comprising:
a socket with an opening portion;
the bearing seat as set forth in Claim 5 provided in the socket; and
a ball stud with a ball portion rotatably held in this bearing seat and housed in the socket and
a stud portion provided in a protruding condition from this ball portion and to be inserted through
the opening portion.